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April 2, 1954

MEMORANDUM

Last night, at his request, I went to see Maurice Schumann at the Foreign Office. Alphand was with him. Maurice started off by saying he had only had in his possession for half an hour preceding our meeting the German paper on the Saar of March 16. I told him I thought it useless to discuss what may have happened to this paper, which has been in the possession of the British and ourselves for almost two weeks and which we understood had been given to François-Poncet on March 16. Schumann admitted his remarks made during this interval about excessive German demands during the Blankenhorn-Poncet negotiations might have been moderated had he been aware of the contents of this document.

We then proceeded to discuss what were the most important differences between the Van der Goes, Quai d'Orsay, and German proposals. I told him I felt the French attitude toward Europeanization should be changed to give the Saar Commissioner only a consultative status instead of conferring on him a right to vote in a Council of Ministers. Schumann was resistant to any change in this respect on the ground that, as the Commissioner would not be a Sarrois, Frenchman, or German, his equality with the Ministers would not imply any sovereign status for the Saar. I replied that the nationality of this officer would not seem to me to be of great importance, and pointed out to him various examples in French and Spanish history of foreigners occupying high ministerial positions.

Schumann stated he might be able to accept this change.

Secondly, I told him of what seemed to be the necessity, from a German standpoint, to have the Council of Europe supervision replaced later by

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a six-nation organism, for which his paper had made no provision. After an elaborate disquisition on the merits of the Council of Europe, he said he thought he might be able to accept such a change in his previous attitude.

Thirdly, in regard to the economic provisions, I observed what seemed to me the most important thing from the French standpoint was to maintain the French franc as the currency of the Saar, with the proviso it would be replaced by a European currency — which is doubtful — were it ever agreed upon. As to the economic provisions, I thought the language of the Council of Europe report should be used. The Germans should be induced to drop their demand for equal access within a two-year period. This was something he could [redacted] negotiate with them. He stated his readiness to make certain trade concessions to the Germans, while maintaining the Franco-Saar customs union. He expressed his fear of transshipments flooding the French market. I told him we had given some thought to this and it should not be difficult to handle.

He then embarked on an interchange which threatened to become highly technical on the Saar coal mining industry and the composition of its Board of Directors. Here, the French wish to maintain the proportionate membership as 50 percent Sarrois and 50 percent French. The Germans wish to have it 60 percent Sarrois, 20 percent French and 20 percent German. Maurice said the French will never yield on this.

Next, he turned his attention to American, British and German guarantees of any Saar settlement. I told him at a proper time both the British and ourselves would be glad to consider what we might do in this connection, but it was essential any agreement reached be a truly European solution.

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We rehashed the subject of commitments made by Secretaries of State Byrnes, Marshall and Acheson on American support of the French status of the Saar. I told him I did not see how the Germans could possibly guarantee to confirm any agreement which might be reached at a later peace settlement for the same reasons propounded by Monsieur Bidault at Berlin on the lack of juridical power in a predecessor state to bind the decisions of a successor state. Schumann said he had been charged by Bidault with the responsibility for continuing negotiations with the Germans, and he would give serious consideration to the March 16 German draft and make some changes in his own.

David Bruce

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